



**eNews from Sen. Lisa Murkowski - Vol. 2, Issue 16: : [Visit Senator Murkowski's Web Site](#)**  
**November 21 , 2006**

### **New Family Health History Project to Focus on Alaska Native Communities**

The United States Department of Health and Human Services recently announced a new outreach project to help educate Alaska Natives about the importance of knowing their family health histories. Many diseases, such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease, can run in families. Health care professionals can use your family health history to help predict the disorders for which you may be at risk. Such information can help health care professionals develop more individualized strategies for keeping you and your family healthy. The one-year project will provide \$100,000 to develop community-based models to increase awareness among the public and health care professionals about the value of family history information in promoting good health and preventing disease. [For more information click here.](#)

### **Elmendorf Scheduled to Receive 36 New F-22 Aircraft in 2008**

The United States Air Force has announced that Alaska will host the F-22. Through a concept known as "Ready Elmendorf," Alaska's aircraft and pilots will initially operate at Langley Air Force Base and take advantage of the 1st Fighter Wing's F-22 operations and maintenance experience. While at Langley, Elmendorf's Raptors will sport the "AK" tail flash. Pilots assigned to PACAF will wear Elmendorf's 90th Fighter Squadron patches; however, they will be fully integrated into Langley's 27th and 94th Fighter Squadrons.

Once Elmendorf's F-22s begin the transfer from Langley to their permanent home in Alaska, PACAF pilots will transfer as well. The first F-22s are scheduled to transfer from Langley to Elmendorf by January, 2008. Eventually, Elmendorf will stand up two active-duty F-22 squadrons, the 90th and 525th, as well as a Reserve associate squadron, the 302nd FS.

[\*For more information on this impressive aircraft visit the Air Force's website.\*](#)



*Lieutenant General Carrol H. Chandler, Deputy Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, points out some of the breakthroughs achieved by the new F-22.*

### **IRS Has Refund for 358 Alaskan Taxpayers**

An average refund of \$620 is waiting for 358 Alaskan taxpayers whose refund checks were returned to the Internal Revenue Service as undeliverable. The checks, worth a total of over \$222,000, can be claimed as soon as their owners update their addresses with the IRS. In some cases, a taxpayer has more than one check waiting.

Taxpayers can use the ["Where's My Refund?"](#) feature at [IRS.gov](#) to learn the status of their refunds. To use it, a taxpayer must enter a Social Security number, filing status (such as single or married filing jointly) and the refund amount shown on the taxpayer's 2005 tax return. When the information is submitted, "Where's My Refund?" will display the status of a refund and, in some cases, provide instructions on how to resolve potential account issues.

Refund checks can go astray for a variety of reasons. Sometimes a life change results in a change of address. When a taxpayer moves or changes address and fails to notify the IRS or the U.S. Postal Service, a check sent to the taxpayer's last known address is returned to the IRS.

"Where's My Refund?" now has an online mailing address update feature for taxpayers whose refund checks were returned to IRS. If an undeliverable check was originally issued within the past

12 months, the taxpayer will be prompted online to provide an updated mailing address.

Taxpayers can access a telephone version of "Where's My Refund?" by calling 1-800-829-1954.

### **Deadline for Academy Nomination Applications is December 15**

Each year I have the privilege of nominating outstanding Alaskan students for appointment to one of the four service academies. The President of the United States officially makes all appointments to the United States service academies. However, each member of Congress is allotted a limited number of nominations, which they may submit for consideration of an appointment (by the academy) to fill the vacancies at each academy. Because securing a nomination does not guarantee an appointment or offer of admission, the entire process is highly competitive. You are therefore encouraged to apply to as many sources as you are eligible, including, but not limited to, your Congressional Delegation and the Vice President of the United States.

If you are interested in learning more please visit my [website](#).



*Jason Bowers, a 1999 graduate of Service High School, recently graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. He was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps. Bowers, who earned a bachelor's degree in political science, is the son of Paul and Sally Bowers of Anchorage.*

### **Enrollment Open for Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit**

Enrollment dates for the Medicare prescription drug benefit run from November 15 to December 31, 2006. During this time period, enrolled beneficiaries can switch drug plans and newcomers can

enroll in a drug plan for the first time. This year, Alaskans have 45 drug plans to choose from. Many plans have enhanced coverage for the "donut hole," with several co-payments and deductibles. Seniors may call 1-800-Medicare (1-800-633-4227) for more information, and to sign up during open enrollment. The line is open 24 hours a day, including weekends. For additional details on Medicare, see [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

Beneficiaries may be eligible for additional assistance through the Federal Low-Income Subsidy or from the State's SeniorCare Program, which covers drug premiums and deductibles for singles with incomes up to \$20,913 and couples up to \$28,053. For more information on programs at the State of Alaska, visit the State's Senior Information Office [website](#) or call (907) 269-3680 or 1-800-478-6065 (statewide).

### **VA to Authorize Payment for Lodging to Qualified Veterans**

One of the biggest concerns that Alaska veterans have shared with me is the need to travel for healthcare services, sometimes at the veteran's own expense. I have been working with Secretary Nicholson to address the many shortfalls in Alaska and I am pleased that the Alaska VA Healthcare System has begun to authorize lodging expenses for qualified veterans who require care in Anchorage. This is a good first step, but I recognize that more needs to be done. I will continue to work with the VA to find ways to provide care locally to Veterans outside of Anchorage and to minimize travel outside of the State.

For information on the new lodging benefit you may contact the Beneficiary Travel Section in Anchorage at 907-257-4738 or 1-888-353-7574, ext. 4738.



## **HAPPY THANKSGIVING**



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